

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 4758

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: BEXP, SA
SUBJECT: BOARD MEETING OF THE SALINE WATER CONVERSION CORPORATION
(SWCC) - DISCUSSION OF JIDDA IV AND JUBAIL PHASE I

1. THE SALINE WATER CONVERSION CORPORATION (SWCC) HELD A BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING ON MONDAY, JULY 5. ATTENDING WERE THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (CHAIRMAN), THE GOVERNOR OF SWCC, AND DEPUTY MINISTERS OF INDUSTRY AND ELECTRICITY, PLANNING, FINANCE, AND PETROLEUM AND MINERALS.

2. A SWCC OFFICIAL INFORMED EMBOFF THAT INITIAL DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON THE AWARDED OF CONTRACTS FOR JIDDA IV AND JUBAIL PHASE I DESAL PLANTS. PRINCE MOHAMED AL FAISAL, GOVERNOR OF SWCC, WAS EAGER TO GO AHEAD WITH THESE PROJECTS ASAP. THE OTHER BOARD MEMBERS REPORTEDLY VOICED THEIR OPPOSITION TO AWARDED THE CONTRACTS AT THIS TIME, SAYING THAT SWCC WAS MOVING TOO RAPIDLY, THEREBY EMBARRASSING OTHER MINISTRIES WHICH HAVE HAD DIFFICULTY IN COMPLETING PROJECTED GOALS OF THE CURRENT FIVE YEAR PLAN.

3. THE OTHER BOARD MEMBERS WENT SO FAR AS TO SUGGEST THAT SWCC HOLD OFF ON THE YENBO DESAL PLANT PROJECT AS WELL. THE YENBO PLANT IS CURRENTLY BEING DESIGNED BY SOCIETEC (FR.), WITH THE TENDER FOR CONSTRUCTION NOT DUE FOR RELEASE UNTIL NEXT YEAR.

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4. PRINCE MOHAMED WAS REPORTEDLY UNABLE TO
PERSUADE HIS COLLEAGUES TO ALTER THEIR STAND.

5. COMMENTS: FOREIGN FIRMS HAVE BEEN WAITING
SINCE FEBRUARY FOR A DECISION ON THE JUBAIL CONTRACT.
IT NOW APPEARS THEY MAY BE WAITING CONSIDERABLY
LONGER UNLESS PRINCE MOHAMED CAN SUCCEED IN HIS
STRUGGLE WITH OTHER SWCC BOARD MEMBERS.
PORTER

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